

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1, 8, 9, 12, 18, 23, 64, 67 and 72 of the present patent application were amended as follows:

1. (AMENDED) A composite material comprising:

a substrate, said substrate comprising at least a first layer and a second layer, said first layer having a first surface and a second surface; and

a surfactant applied to the first layer of the substrate;

wherein the surfactant lowers the surface tension of a fluid which contacts the first layer of the substrate but does not substantially adversely effect the absorption capacity or wicking height of the second layer of the substrate and the second layer of the substrate substantially inactivates the surfactant.

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8. (AMENDED) The composite material of Claim 6, wherein the second layer has a pH of less than about 6.

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9. (AMENDED) The composite material of Claim 6 wherein the second layer of the substrate has pH in the range from about 1 to 7.

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12. (AMENDED) The composite material of Claim 7, wherein the second layer of the substrate has pH in the range from to about 14. ?

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18. (formerly not numbered, renumbered 18 by the Examiner and now AMENDED) The composite material of Claim 1, wherein the surfactant is selected from a class of surfactants having a disulfide bond or those containing a ketal group or a siloxal group.

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23. (formerly 22, renumbered 23 by the Examiner and now AMENDED) A multi-layered substrate with a surfactant applied thereto, said surfactant selected from the group consisting of a class of surfactants having a disulfide bond, a ketal group, or a siloxal group,

wherein said surfactant lowers the surface tension of fluids contacting the substrate to which the surfactant is applied such that fluid intake into the substrate is not substantially adversely effected, and such that the surfactant is substantially inactivated upon contacting the second layer of the substrate.